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COMMITTEE ON INSULAR AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 1908

STATEMENTS OF
HON. WM. H. TAFT
SECRETARY OF WAR

MR. WM. MORGAN SHUSTER
PHILIPPINE COMMISSION



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HEARING ON SENATE BILL 5262.

COMMITTEE ON INSULAR AFFAIRS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Wednesday, April 15, 1908.

The committee met at 10.30 a. m., Hon. Henry A. Cooper, chairman, presiding.

STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM H. TAFT, SECRETARY OF WAR.

The CHAIRMAN. We are here this morning to have a hearing on Senate bill 5262. It is a bill "to repeal an act approved April 30, 1906, to regulate shipping in trade between ports of the United States and ports or places in the Philippine Archipelago, and between ports or places in the Philippine Archipelago, and for other purposes."

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir. Let me say that the act makes no change in the existing law except in section 3, and that change is only that it makes permanent the nonapplicability of the coastwise laws to the trade between the United States and the Philippine Islands.

The CHAIRMAN. Please state to the committee the reason and the necessity for this legislation.

Secretary TAFT. The reason for it is that it would require an awkward statement in respect to the amendments of various acts, and therefore it was thought wiser, I believe, in the Senate, to reenact certain things which are in the law to-day, as for instance, the first section.

The first section permits the Filipino legislature to regulate the interisland trade as it sees fit. That is the law to-day.

The second section treats vessels coming into the United States from the Philippines, so far as the tonnage is concerned, exactly as if they were our own vessels. That is the law to-day.

The third section is the section to which I refer, and is the effective section of the act. That is, it makes permanent the nonapplicability of the coastwise laws as to the trade between the Philippines and the United States.

Section 4 is a reenactment of the provisions with respect to licenses, lighterage, and that sort of thing. The fifth section is already the law. The sixth section is the repealing clause.

The CHAIRMAN. That really applies only to section 3.

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; it repeals that section of the law which provides that the coastwise trading laws shall only apply until July 1, 1909; and the only effect of this law is to extend that time indefinitely.

The CHAIRMAN. You said July, but my impression is that it is April. The annual report of the Bureau of Insular Affairs fixes April 11, 1909, as the date when the law is to go into effect.

Secretary TAFT. Then I am wrong about it. I thought it was the 1st of July. The passage of this act is for the benefit of the friends of the Philippine Islands. The Bureau of Insular Affairs is constantly on watch in respect to legislation in Congress affecting the Philippines, to prevent the necessity of making any effort in respect to the non-applicability of the law. That is all the way in which the law is affected. It makes permanent the policy of relief of trade between the United States and the Philippine Islands from the impositions of the coastwise laws. The wisdom of Congress is already shown in making a temporary suspension, and there is not the slightest doubt about the wisdom of making that provision permanent, for the reason—and I think the reason will appeal to those of us who were originally in favor of making the coastwise laws applicable to the shipping interests—that it is the only possible means of improving the business. The only possible means of improving the business and giving it to our American bottoms would be a subsidy bill which would put them by direct contribution on an equality with foreign trading, for the reason that if by law you say that nothing shall pass between the Philippines and the United States except in American bottoms, which is the effect of the operation of the coastwise law, that you impose a burden on that trade equal to the higher rate that American ships are bound to charge, in view of the laws which govern the operation of American ships, and the necessity for the employment of more expensive labor and many other limitations on the management of American ships.

What is going to be the effect of that? The people of the Philippine Islands do not have to trade with the United States if they do not want to. There is no obligation on their part to buy anything in the United States nor send anything to the United States. Their merchants have the privilege of dealing with any country they please, and therefore they deal where they can sell best and buy the cheapest, and if you impose upon them the burden or necessity of sending in American bottoms what they sell and buy, then American bottoms will not come to the United States at all. In other words, it tends to help the ships of the United States. They have the option to deal with any country, unless we want to pass a law, as they did in England in reference to Ireland, governing the business of that island, but I suppose Congress does not want to go that far.

Mr. JONES. Would not the effect of the application of the coastwise laws to the trade between the Philippines and the United States not only prevent development, but would it not almost destroy the trade we now have?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir; there is a possibility that the islands may have a little trade with New England in cordage and hemp, but I very much doubt whether that business would not be destroyed.

Mr. JONES. They now get a rebate on that export?

Secretary TAFT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Notwithstanding the enactment of the law now in existence and the notice that the American shipping interests have had, only a fraction more than 6 per cent of the products coming from the Philippines to the United States were carried in American bottoms during the last fiscal year.

Secretary TAFT. I was not aware that the statistics made such a poor showing, but it does not surprise me.

The CHAIRMAN. Your reasoning is borne out by the facts.

Secretary TAFT. The present law requires that hemp may receive a rebate where it shall be sent in any vessel direct to the United States. Perhaps that favors in some little way American bottoms.

I am sure there was no difference of opinion in the Senate committee on the subject of passing this act. That has already been indicated in the suspension of the act, or in the idea of temporarily making this act nonapplicable, and it seems to me that the reason for that position is a reason for making the provision permanent. Those of us who are in favor of this are glad to be in a position where it requires action rather than to be in a position of continuing the policy. That is really our interest in the matter.

Mr. JONES. I was going to suggest that unless some members desire to have more information from the Secretary upon the subject, because I think that we all agree that this act ought to be passed, that I will move to make a favorable report upon the bill.

Thereupon the bill was ordered to be favorably reported.

The CHAIRMAN. Before we close the hearing there are a few figures that I would like have go in the record. The report of the Bureau of Customs for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1907, made through the collector of customs in the Philippine Islands, sets forth that of the foreign steam vessels which entered and cleared in the Philippines, to the number of 467, only 24 were American vessels, thus showing that at the present time there is no possibility of American bottoms doing more than a small part of the business between the Philippines and the United States. Of the 10 sailing vessels 8 were American vessels and 2 were British vessels, and all but 2 of them were under the British flag. It amounts to a demonstration that if we do not pass a law like this and continue to try to force the trade to be carried on by American ships the trade will go elsewhere, as the Secretary has stated.

STATEMENT OF HON. W. MORGAN SHUSTER, MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE COMMISSION AND SECRETARY OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The CHAIRMAN. How long have you been stationed in the Philippine Islands?

Mr. SHUSTER. Since September, 1901—about six and a half years.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you familiar with the conditions of the schools in the Philippines?

Mr. SHUSTER. I am.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you examined H. R. 394?

Mr. SHUSTER. I have.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you please give us your opinion as to the advisability of the enactment of this bill for the general benefit of the schools in the Philippines?

Mr. SHUSTER. I am strongly in favor of the prompt enactment of this bill. It will in the course of time give us a permanent school fund, which will be of substantial aid to our system of public education. I have just read over the bill twice and have nothing to suggest except its prompt passage. It will be a popular measure in the Philippines. I think that it will make the people feel that Congress appreciates the progress which they are making in education and takes

sufficient interest in them to want to help them in every possible manner. I am sure that the law will be favored by every member of the Philippine government.

The CHAIRMAN. About how many school children have you now?

Mr. SHUSTER. About 480,000 at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN. About how many attendants?

Mr. SHUSTER. The actual average daily attendance is probably less than 300,000, but I should explain that attendance at the schools in one respect is necessarily irregular. A considerable number of the children can attend school only during certain seasons of the year. Their parents are poor, often extremely poor, and the children have to go to work at a very early age. During the seasons for gathering the crops in the different parts of the islands there is a marked diminution in the attendance at the schools. This brings the daily average of attendance down. For instance, the average total enrollment by months during the preceding school year was about 347,000. All the above figures are exclusive of the Moro Province, which has its own separate school department. All things considered, I think that the attendance is extremely good throughout the year.

The CHAIRMAN. Generally speaking, what have you to say of the condition of the schools there?

Mr. SHUSTER. While an ideal condition does not exist there by any means, still the general educational situation is very much better than we had reason to anticipate. The principal idea has been to give the poorer classes, or the masses of the people, an opportunity to acquire a common school education, and in this I think that we have been successful.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the attitude of the people toward the schools?

Mr. SHUSTER. At the present time the Filipinos are undeniably in strong favor of a public-school system throughout the islands. When it was first decided that the Filipinos should be taught in the English language there was undoubtedly some opposition to it. This was no more than natural. However, to the lasting credit of the Filipino people be it said that, so soon as they realized what education meant for their children, the vast majority of them gave their support to the public schools and to instruction in the English language.

I have recently visited nearly every one of the 40 provinces and subprovinces in the islands—everyone of them once and some of them more than once—and have personally inspected the work of the primary, secondary, industrial, and high schools, so that I speak advisedly when I say that there is no general opposition to the schools, and, furthermore, that the people are generally favorable to the teaching of the English language in the schools.

Mr. McKINLAY. What progress have they made in that respect?

Mr. SHUSTER. I think that the progress has been excellent, and the extension of the knowledge of English is most encouraging.

Mr. McKINLAY. Is that true of the older pupils?

Mr. SHUSTER. It is true throughout the schools. As I go through the provinces I find a remarkable number of children, young and old, along the roads speaking fairly good English. They do not speak it with perfection by any means, but this is hardly surprising when you remember that it was only about seven years ago that the Government had neither schools nor teachers. It was necessary to build the

former and to make a beginning by bringing the latter from the United States. In the year 1901 over 1,000 American teachers were brought to the Philippines. The first thing to do was to "improvise" teachers among the Filipinos—that is to say, it was necessary to teach a large number of Filipino young men and young women sufficient English to enable them to teach others in that language and something of pedagogics. We now have between six and seven thousand Filipino teachers. In many cases they acquired the English language in two or three years. The native teachers are generally in charge of the primary or municipal schools, although a large number of them teach in the secondary grades. The results with the pupils are not perfect English in the lower grades, but in the secondary schools and in the high schools the English spoken is exceedingly good.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you know of the normal school in Manila?

Mr. SHUSTER. I think that it has been one of our most successful institutions. It has turned out a large number of Filipino teachers in a very short time, and the results which they have accomplished have been noteworthy. We had practically no Filipino teachers of English to start with, and that emergency was very well met by the normal school at Manila and the normal institutes which were established in most of the provinces. In connection with the normal school at Manila a nurses' training course has been started, in which young women are given practical education in the care of the sick, in the simpler methods for the prevention of disease, and very careful and thorough instruction in the rules of household hygiene.

Mr. MCKINLAY. Do the Moros accept the teaching of the English language, or is there resistance among that class?

Mr. SHUSTER. I would not like to say that the Moros have taken as well to English as the Filipinos, though I feel some diffidence in speaking on that subject for the reason that the Moro Province is a separate and practically autonomous government, and their school system is entirely so.

The CHAIRMAN. It is under military rule, is it not?

Mr. SHUSTER. Yes, sir; practically so.

The CHAIRMAN. Their religion is Mohammedan?

Mr. SHUSTER. Yes, sir. I might say that the Moros have shown considerable interest in the different branches of industrial work. The arts and trades and the use of modern tools seem to appeal to them.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know anything about the attendance at the fair which they had in Mindanao?

Mr. SHUSTER. No, sir; I was not there.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know anything about the eagerness of the Moros to get American machinery?

Mr. SHUSTER. I have read in the published accounts of the fair that they showed considerable interest along those lines.

The CHAIRMAN. What class of school buildings are erected in the Philippines?

Mr. SHUSTER. As far as may be possible, we build nothing but permanent structures. The schoolhouses are generally built of reinforced concrete, stone, or of hard woods. In a few cases we have used regular bricks. Several years ago it was necessary to erect some temporary structures, in order to get some kind of shelter for the

children. Of course, the erection of temporary buildings would not be an economical policy.

The CHAIRMAN. How is it as to the furnishings of the school buildings?

Mr. SHUSTER. They are of a simple nature. In many schools we have desks and seats which have been made by the pupils themselves.

The CHAIRMAN. Was manual training taught in those schools?

Mr. SHUSTER. Yes, sir; we give manual training in the schools. It has recently been made compulsory in the primary grades. Great stress is being laid on the importance of what we term "industrial work," including practical instruction in agriculture and in domestic science for the young women. A large proportion of the funds appropriated for school construction last year were expended for schools of this description. The situation of the Filipinos, their previous training and habits of thought, the agricultural and economic depression from which the islands have been suffering during the last ten years, and the consequent necessity of making every young member of the community a self-supporting individual at the earliest practicable date, all counsel the adoption of this policy.

In the different schools of arts and trades instruction is given in English, arithmetic, geography, mechanical drawing, in the use and care of modern machinery and tools, in woodworking, including bench work, carving, turning, and cabinetmaking; in ironworking, including bench work, filing, blacksmithing, and iron machine work, and in finishing, including painting and varnishing. We are also starting instruction in advanced boatbuilding and wheelwrighting. Exceptional aptitude and ability have been shown by the Filipino boys for these lines of work, and they exhibit great dexterity and quickness in the use of tools and implements of all kinds. The industrial instruction which I have just mentioned is of course that given in the regular trade schools. In the primary grades throughout the islands the industrial work includes weaving, hat making, drawing, elementary agriculture, woodworking (ship and carpentry), elementary pottery and masonry, the making of rope, cordage, brooms, brushes, etc., by the boys, and weaving, sewing, cooking, dyeing, bleaching, hat making, and pottery for the girls.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you say as to the aptitude of the Filipinos?

Mr. SHUSTER. It is especially marked in any work involving the artistic senses, but they take well to all kinds of labor, which is contrary to the predictions of many who went so far as to say that the Filipinos would not attend the trade schools because manual labor was opposed to their previous ideas and training. As a matter of fact, they have shown great enthusiasm for these schools, and are proud of their productions. These schools in turn have been of great benefit in imbuing the minds of the young men with the idea of the dignity of manual labor and of the lasting benefits of patient, constant, honest toil.

In the Insular School of Arts and Trades at Manila, which is the principal industrial school of the islands, we have something like 400 pupils, and over 200 applicants on the waiting list, for whom no teachers and quarters are available. Manila is the center of culture and wealth of the islands, and if there were any marked indisposition on the part of the Filipinos to receive instruction along industrial lines it would be evident there. As a matter of fact, the pupils

of the insular school are extremely proud of their status and of their work.

The CHAIRMAN. I was told that some of them evince talent in an architectural way and in the matter of drawing.

Mr. SHUSTER. They have shown aptitude for that class of work. In the office of the Government architect, who makes the plans and drawings for all the schools and other buildings of the Government, a large number of Filipino draftsmen and assistants are employed. There are also a number of Filipino architects practicing their profession in Manila. I have no reason to doubt that with proper educational opportunities they would make exceptionally good architects. The Filipinos have an innate bent for artistic work of all kinds, such as music, painting, drawing, sculpturing, and carving.

Mr. OLMSTED. Can you give us any idea as to the amount of the sale of public lands?

Mr. SHUSTER. That would be difficult. I think that at the present time the sales of public lands are increasing slightly, but they are not considerable; I would hesitate about trying to give you figures without looking up the data. There is no indication that in the immediate future the sales of public land will be large. In the course of time, however, the revenues derived from this source should be substantial.

The CHAIRMAN. We will be compelled to close at this point, and I am sure that the committee is very much obliged to Mr. Shuster for his presence and his valuable statement.

(Thereupon the committee adjourned.)

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